

## THE NEW PLAYS

Turning on  
the Spotlight

BY CHARLES DARNTON

This is necessarily personal. If Francis Wilson and DeWolf Hopper were prima donnas there couldn't, apparently, be greater curiosity about their ages. Again and again the question is asked: "How old is Wilson?" and again—you may notice a slight difference in the insistence—"How old is Hopper?" All this is none of my business, but as several of you have made it yours, I'll do my best as a poor mathematician to satisfy your curiosity. If Francis Wilson qualifies the loving cap given him by the Actors' Equity Association, he will be sixty-six, and if DeWolf Hopper keeps on the way he is going he will reach sixty-three. Anyway that's what the Dicky Bird says. If I should die to-night—out, no matter!

These youngsters at the Park are really responsible for this meddling with the years because of their give-and-take after the second act of "Ermine," with which they added largely to the joy of the week. "No doubt they are still at it, incorrigible and unashamed. Their bitter amenities run something like this:

"Wilson: One of us should say something."

Hopper: I quite agree with you. For obvious reasons you should do the talking.

Wilson: Why?

Hopper: Well, for one thing, your name appears first on the printing, though it's in heaven's name it should I have had the remotest idea.

Wilson: There is another reason, however, of even greater potency.

Wilson: (with a short attempt at loftiness) And what is the more potent reason, pray?

Hopper: You are the older.

(Now let them fight it out!)

Wilson: Perhaps I am. I haven't been able to keep the gray out of my hair, but I've managed to keep it out of my looks and deport. On second thought, however, I don't know that I am the older. I distinctly remember having been taken to see you in pantomime.

Hopper: Yes, and now you're wearing them again—second childhood. However, Francis—

And then the merciless Hopper gives an "e" for an "i" by rasping on overenthusiasm.

"That's a girl's name. He gets letters from cosmetics manufacturers and cold cream purveyors. As a matter of fact, a great many people think he's my wife."

The fight should end there, but it doesn't.

Fooling aside, there is not another stage in the world that could give to "Ermine" such fine performances as Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hopper, nor could there be greater contrast. Wilson's slouch is inimitable and Hopper's grandeur rises almost to the height of the Woolworth Building. More than this, both these comedians are men of brains, alert from head to foot, not merely clowns capering to catch your laugh. Their names and their art will remain alive long after they have played their parts.

But this is getting a bit too serious for the fun we've got out of "Ermine"—and for that matter I was serious, not to say sore, many years ago when I travelled 120 miles to see Wilson in "Ermine," and to my great dismay beheld somebody called an "understudy." But why bother about time when it passes so lightly?

The amusing phase of "Transplanting Jean," the comedy at the Cort Theatre, is that a Frenchman is seriously worried about the gray hairs that come with middle age. An American wouldn't bother about them. He is an optimist who takes life as he finds it—and there you are wherever you are in the world! Arthur Byron takes this point of view in his acting.

Grant Mitchell is certainly the strongest type of prize fighter that ever came out of such training quarters as the Y. M. C. A., but he "cuts it ova" on "The Champion." Aside from him, the good old English sports who rally about him have the real spirit.

Altogether, it has been a good week in the theatre.

Change of Bills  
In Vaudeville

PALACE—With Emma Trentini in song as the headliner, will be the revue "On Fifth Avenue," Eddie Cliff, Margaret Young, Buzzell and Parker, Lillian Roth and others.

RIVERSIDE THEATRE—Gus Edwards' Sing Revue, Clark and Aragon, Tigne and Leedom, Ethel Clinton, Frank Hurst, Ted Dooley, Ryan and Rydell, and the Osborne Trio will make up the bill.

COLONIAL FIRST STREET THEATRE—The Ford Sisters in their "Jollies" will be back, but also include Sylvia Clark, Harry Conley, O'Donnell and Blair, Sivina Willing and Thorne Brothers. The screen feature will be Anita Stewart in "Harriet and the Piper."

JEFFERSON—Karyl Norman, "The Creole Fashion Plate," will head the bill. Eva Shirley, Nelson and Chain, Walter and Walters, and Loney Hassell and others are to appear.

HAMILTON—Charles King will

AMUSEMENTS:

**AUTO SHOW** Grand Central PALACE Jan. 8-15 except Sunday Adm. \$5 inc war tax Opens Today 2PM

DANCE Terrace Garden PALACE 5th fl., next Lexington Ave. Dancing: Mon. 7.15 to 12.30; Tues. 7.15 to 12.45.

All Instruction Private Lessons Day or Evening Sunday Dancing from 7.15—Two Bands

FORBIDDEN FRUIT?

## STARS OF THE STAGE FEATURED IN NEXT WEEK'S ATTRACTIONS AT THEATRES HERE

Film Plays  
For Next Week

RIALTO—Thomas Meighan will be seen in "The Frontier of the Stars."

CARNEGIE HALL—A dramatization of a story by Albert Payson Terhune, with its scenes on the lower east side and Cooney Island. Meighan has the role of a gangster and fighter who undergoes regeneration. Faire Binne plays the heroine. There will also be a Clyde Cook comedy called "All Wrong" and the Rialto Magazine. The chief number of the concert programme will be "Sorcerer's Apprentice," played by the orchestra.

RIVOLI—Ina Claire makes her screen debut in "Polly With a Past," the play by George Middleton and Guy Bolton in which she was brought out as a Belasco star. Her role, it may be recalled, is that of a minister's daughter serving as a maid, who is induced to assume the guise of a French vampire. Pictures of life in East Africa and Uganda, taken by the Paramount-Vandenbergh expedition, a cartoon and the Rivoli Pictorial will complete the film bill. Selections from "Cavalleria Rusticana" will be given by orchestra and singers.

EDWARD MORRIS—Concerts by National Symphony Orchestra, first concert Mengelberg series.

MENGELBERG—Conducting Carnegie Hall, Thurs. aft., Jan. 13, at 9 PM.

EDWARD MORRIS—Piano Recital, Mason & Hamlin.

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—First Concerts Mengelberg Series, Manhattan Opera House, Sixth Street near 6th Ave.

MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE—TO-MORROW MATINEE & NIGHT, 25 to 100 EYES, 50¢ to 25¢

EDWARD MORRIS—Piano Recital, Carnegie Hall, Thurs. aft., Jan. 13, at 9 PM.

MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE—TO-MORROW MATINEE & NIGHT, 15 to 100 EYES, 50¢ to 50¢

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